

S. 3040

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3040, a bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce the exposure of children, workers, and consumers to toxic chemical substances.

S. RES. 569

At the request of Mr. INOUE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 569, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the earthquake that struck Sichuan Province of the People's Republic of China on May 12, 2008.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 3045. A bill to establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Forest Heritage Area in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Forest Heritage Area would be the first Heritage Area in Alaska, and one of a few Heritage Areas in the West. Our proposal encompasses the wide mountainous corridor that was the major gateway to pioneer settlement of the State, extending from Seward through the Kenai Mountains to the upper Turnagain Arm. Here mountain trails developed by indigenous First Alaskans became prospectors' trails and, eventually, the roads and railroad used by the pioneers who settled the last frontier of the United States. Transportation, resource development and settlement in this rugged, often-treacherous landscape provide a powerful reminder of the fortitude and resourcefulness of the pioneers of America's Last Frontier.

Historic communities that were developed around mining and early transportation routes have preserved much of their original character. A visit to the Hope Townsite is a visit to a living community that still resembles the gold rush town that it was before the rush to the Klondike. The City of Whittier provides a glimpse of our Nation's intense effort to develop an ice-free port to supply troops who were defending our boundaries in Alaska during World War II. As in the early days, all the signs of human activity in the corridor are dwarfed by the sweeping landscapes of the region, by the magnificence of the mountains, glaciers and tidal fjords and the dominance and power of nature. Turnagain Arm, once a critical transportation link, has one of the world's greatest tidal ranges.

This Heritage Area proposal, truly a grass roots product, began in 1997 when the Kenai Peninsula Historical Association asked a group of local community leaders to reach out and tell people about Heritage Areas. They were successful in garnering support from

communities throughout the corridor. These local folks have extensive knowledge of the resources; they are personally acquainted with the area; they understand the ruggedness and the beauty of the land, and certainly appreciate the potential economic value this designation would bring to the area.

In 2000 these community leaders organized the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area Corridor Communities Association as a non-profit organization with a board of directors made up of corridor community representatives. Later a congressionally designated grant made it possible for the new non-profit to serve as a local coordinating entity and prove its ability to plan and accomplish projects consistent with Heritage Area purposes. Through their management of the grant, historic structures were preserved, a small museum has opened, parks and pavilions with historic interpretation have been constructed, oral histories have been collected from old-timers and recorded, and an excellent book on corridor history has been published.

Since the corridor is within the western part of the Chugach National Forest, the Association has asked to put this Heritage Area under the Secretary of Agriculture. The bill provides for coordination with the Secretaries of Interior and includes the same components, structure and national recognition as Heritage Areas under the Secretary of Interior. Similar components assure that the Heritage Area will not impact private property rights or public land management. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior would establish coordination at the Secretarial level. Passage of this bill will be an excellent way to commemorate the recent centennial of the Chugach National Forest.

I am proud to lend my support to this grassroots effort by introducing legislation today to designate the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm in Alaska as our most northern and western National Heritage Area, the first National Heritage Area in Alaska and the first National Forest Heritage Area to be assisted by the U.S. Forest Service.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 3045

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Forest Heritage Area Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm transportation corridor—

(A) is a major gateway to Alaska;

(B) includes a range of transportation routes used by—

(i) indigenous people; and

(ii) the pioneers that settled the last frontier of the United States;

(C) is located in the heart of the Chugach National Forest, which was established by presidential proclamation on July 23, 1907, by Theodore Roosevelt; and

(D) includes a historically significant segment of the Iditarod Trail connecting Seward and Nome, which was—

(i) scouted by the Alaska Road Commission in 1908; and

(ii) designated as the Iditarod National Historic Trail in 1978;

(2) the cultural landscape formed by indigenous people and by settlement, transportation, and modern resource development in the rugged and often treacherous natural setting of the transportation corridor provides a powerful testimony to the human fortitude, perseverance, and resourcefulness of the people who—

(A) settled the frontier; and

(B) represent the proudest heritage of the United States;

(3) the natural history and scenic splendor of the transportation corridor are equally outstanding;

(4) the transportation corridor includes vistas of the power of nature, such as evidence of earthquake subsidence, recent avalanches, retreating glaciers, and tidal action along Turnagain Arm, which has the second greatest tidal range in the world;

(5) there is a national interest in recognizing, preserving, promoting, and interpreting the resources of the transportation corridor;

(6) the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm region is—

(A) geographically and culturally cohesive; and

(B) defined by a corridor of historic routes, trails, water, railroads, and roadways through a distinct landscape of mountains, lakes, and fjords;

(7) the region played a unique role as a portal and transportation corridor through which indigenous people, explorers, missionaries, gold miners, cannery workers, big game hunters, homesteaders, foresters, railroad workers, military personnel, and petroleum developers traveled into southcentral and interior Alaska as part of the waves of travel that characterized the history of the United States;

(8) the region exhibits a high degree of integrity with vast tracks of rugged, undeveloped areas and natural scenery that still look much as the area did to the original inhabitants, the indigenous people, and early explorers and pioneers of the region;

(9) studies that led to the designation of the Iditarod National Historic Trail, the Seward Highway All American Road, and the Alaska Railroad National Scenic Railroad—

(A) determined the national significance of separate transportation routes traversing the region; and

(B) illustrate the national significance of heritage resources in the region;

(10) designation of the transportation corridor as a national heritage area—

(A) provides for a comprehensive interpretation of human history in the wide transportation corridor through the Kenai Mountains and upper Turnagain Arm, including early Native trade routes, historic waterways, mining trails, historic communities, and the 3 designated routes of national significance referred to in paragraph (9);

(B) recognizes the national significance of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm transportation corridor, including—

(i) the historic and modern resource development of the transportation corridor; and